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"The Adventure of Living"

There appeared not long ago under the above suggestive title a book of much charm and interest, by the Editor of the "Spectator," Sir J. St. Loe Strachey. As befitted an autobiographical work, it contained vivid impressions of men and things gained during years of fruitful activity. But while its author discoursed of experiences peculiarly his own, which few ordinary persons are privileged to have, there is something common to him and all who truly and strenuously live. It is suggested by the title itself, and it is from it we make our departure.

Every human life is an adventure, even though to outward seeming commonplace and insignificant. The time comes to all people when the shields and shelters devised by prudence fail, and we must fare forth to the unknown. Qualities like faith, trust, buoyant confidence, are the indispensable equipment of everyone who truly lives his life of opportunity. There is never any guarantee that "the thing which has been" is "the thing which shall be." We act as if we believed the past would persist, but the motive of our action is supplied by faith. Even the scientist, dealing with matters of fact and unconcerned about the fanciful, would make no advance on past theories and achievements did he not make the ventures of faith. At every stage of his onward march into the realm of nature he quits the certain for the uncertain, and stakes his reputation at the promptings of a new hypothesis, which is merely faith under another name.

Hence, so far from its being a reproach against religion that it relies on faith even more than upon knowledge, the gravest indictment against religion is brought because of its half-faiths, its moral and mental timidities. It becomes too conservative, clings too tenaciously to the past, refuses to quit the familiar and peg out its new territory in the land of promise. The flesh-pots of Egypt are too enticing, the dangers of the desert too appalling for organised religion to face about and go boldly onward. The more daring and venturous leader of men has ever to impel the children of men to go forward. They carry on with the old when it has lost its virtue and its vital attraction, and turn deaf ears to the clarion call of true living, which is ever adventurous and progressive.

Assuredly, human life without its venture of faith, its joyous response to hope's summons, is drab and unattractive. Religion, rightly conceived, garbs life in the clothing of romance and makes it real, regenerate, and ever renewed. The spiritual heroes of humanity were fashioned after the pattern of an Abraham who heard the summons and went forth, "not knowing whither he went."

Notes of the Month.

We are glad to learn that our January Number was most favourably received by our readers. Were it possible we would gladly maintain the same number of pages and the same standard of articles. At present, however, that is quite impossible. Even with the usual sixteen pages of reading matter, as compared with the twenty pages given last month, the Magazine is produced at a loss. We cannot too strongly urge upon our readers that the only remedy for this is an increased circulation in our different congregations. But what are the facts? Although last month's issue was made a Missionary Number at the suggestion of several of our readers, we have not heard of more than one or two congregations which increased their orders for missionary purposes. That is hardly the way to make our message known. Had each regular reader made it a point to purchase a second copy and hand it to a friend, preferably an outsider, our circulation would have been doubled last month, and possibly greatly increased as regards subsequent months. It is only in that way that progress can be made and our cause become more influential. We strongly appeal to our readers to do all in their power with that end persistently in view.

* * *

We desire to give early notice to our readers of the holding of the Triennial Conference in Manchester from April 16th onwards. Although the programme has not yet been made public we understand that it will contain many attractive items. But more important than such details will be the opportunity of friendly intercourse with members of our household of faith, who only on such occasions can find a common centre. Every effort will be made in Manchester to ensure satisfactory hospitality for the delegates, and now that railway fares are being lowered, it is possible that the number of visitors will again approximate to pre-war dimensions. We sincerely hope that it may be possible for many North of Ireland friends to be present at the Manchester Meetings.

* * *

Our readers will share the regret with which we learned of the prospective departure to England of the Rev. R. Philipson, B.A. He has done faithful work at Downpatrick, and we sympathize with our friends there in sustaining the loss of his services. But the best compliment they can pay him is to continue his good work and appoint a successor in whose hands it will be actively promoted. We hope soon to learn that steps are being taken to find a suitable man for the pulpit when Mr. Philipson vacates it in March. For the latter we shall hope a very successful ministry at Hinckley.

* * *

The Collectors for the Orphan Society are reminded that all subscriptions should be received and handed in to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. William M'Robert, of the Ulster Bank, Waring Street, Belfast, before the end of March, and that the lists of subscribers need to be sent to the Secretary, the Rev. Alfred Turner, Templepatrick, by the same date. Otherwise subscriptions cannot be included in this year's accounts.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G. J. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

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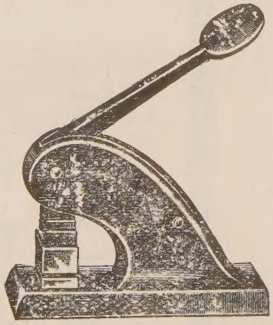

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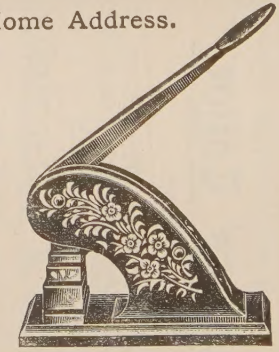

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Young People's Page.

BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY.

The new issue of the Essex Hall Year Book for 1923, published by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, has just come to hand. It gives a great deal of useful information about our churches and ministers and societies and at the beginning it gives an almanac with anniversaries and events for each day. One cannot but be struck with the number of great men born in the month of February; of course, this is not an exhaustive almanac, but still it is rather remarkable that February—the shortest month—should have the birth of seventeen great people recorded, a higher number than any of the other months. April comes next with sixteen, while July and August have only eight each, and January only nine.

The following is a list of the seventeen names as given in the Essex Hall Year Book:—

Feb. 3—Felix Mendelssohn, 1809.
,, 3—F. W. Robertson, 1816.
,, 7—Charles Dickens, 1812.
,, 8—John Ruskin, 1819.
,, 10—Charles Lamb, 1775.
,, 12—Charles Darwin, 1809.
,, 12—Abraham Lincoln, 1809.
,, 14—David Davis, 1745.
,, 15—Sir Frederick Treves, 1853.
,, 16—Melanchthon, 1497.
,, 18—Galileo, 1564.
,, 19—Copernicus, 1473.
,, 21—John Henry Newman, 1801.
,, 22—George Washington, 1732.
,, 22—J. Russell Lowell, 1819.
,, 23—Handel, 1685.
,, 27—H. W. Longfellow, 1807.

Felix Mendelssohn, the first on the list, was the celebrated German composer and musician. He made his first public appearance before he was ten years old, and began to compose symphonies, quartets, etc., from his 12th year. He left between one and two hundred works. We know him best by the oratorios "Elijah" and "St. Paul," and by his "Lieder ohne Worte" ("Songs without Words.").

Frederick William Robertson, of Brighton, was a great pulpit orator; his well known "sermons" were published in a complete edition, seventeen years after his death.

Charles Dickens and his works are too familiar to need description; from 1836, when he published the "Pickwick Papers," his literary reputation was established, and now nearly everyone knows and loves his books, though it is more than fifty-two years since his death.

John Ruskin was an eminent English art critic and writer. His "Modern Painters," published in 1843, created a great sensation by the startling originality of its views and the brilliancy of its style, and established his reputation as an art critic. He also wrote a number of works on Political Economy, and was a great lecturer, before his retirement to Brantwood on Lake Coniston, where he died in January, 1900.

Charles Lamb, the critic and humorist, was educated at Christ's Hospital—the Bluecoat School,—where his life-long friend, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was a fellow-pupil. His first literary success was "Tales from Shakespere" published in 1807, in which Charles did the tragedies and his sister Mary the comedies. His devotion to his poor sister Mary, who suffered at times from mental trouble, is very touching. His "Essays of Elia" are very well known.

Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln were actually born on the same day. The former was the great naturalist founder of the "Darwinian" theory of evolution, his book "On the origin of species by means of natural selection" published in 1859 caused a tremendous uproar as in those days people generally held literally to the account of creation given in Genesis.

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States of America. He was of Quaker origin, and it was very largely due to him that slavery was abolished. He was shot in the theatre at Washington in 1865 by a supposed madman. His death was a great loss to America.

David Davis, of Castell-hyvel, was, as his name implies, a Welshman, and a well known and great preacher.

Sir Frederick Treves, the famous English surgeon, was one of the first

to operate for appendicitis ; it was he who operated on the late King Edward VII.

Philip Melanchthon was a German reformer, and was famous as the collaborator of Martin Luther. He died in 1560.

Galileo was the great Italian physicist and astronomer ; he discovered the isochronism of the pendulum, and the hydrostatic balance ; he constructed a thermometer in 1597 and a telescope in 1609, and discovered Jupiter's satellites in 1610.

Copernicus was the founder of modern astronomy. In 1543 he published an exposition of his system of astronomy, which has since been called by his name—the Copernican system.

John Henry Newman was at first an Anglican clergyman, but later he joined the Roman Catholic Church and finally became a Cardinal. He is known to us as the writer of the hymn " Lead Kindly Light."

George Washington was the first President of the United States and was famous both as a soldier and a statesman. Lecky says of him : " He was in the highest sense of the words a gentleman, and a man of honour, and he carried into public life the severest standard of private morals."

James Russell Lovell was an American poet and essayist, and diplomatist. " The Biglow Papers " and the " Vision of Sir Launfal " are among his most popular writings ; he also wrote the hymn " Once to every man and nation."

George Frederick Handel was a celebrated German composer best known to us by his oratorios " The Messiah," " Saul," " Esther," " Judas Maccabæus," " Samson," etc. He wrote 23 oratorios in all ; for the later part of his life he was blind.

Henry W. Longfellow, the last name on our list, was a very distinguished American poet. His " Tales of a Wayside Inn," " Birds of Passage," " Song of Hiawatha," and " Evangeline," may be mentioned as being well known, and many of his short poems such as " Tell me not in mournful numbers," everyone knows.

" Addresses Biographical and Historical."

(By Alexander Gordon, M.A. The Lindsey Press, 5 Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2. 1922. 5/- Nett.)

A hearty welcome will be given to this volume by different classes of our readers. Those who value history, and by its aid are helped to a better understanding of present facts and conditions, will find in its pages rich materials of culture. Those who feel gratitude for the inheritance of freedom they possess, and desire the acquaintance of the fathers who begat it and them, will be brought face to face with great and influential personalities. The personalities of men like Michael Servetus, Thomas Emlyn, Thomas Firmin, Theophilus Lindsey, Thomas Belsham, Richard Wright, will gain greater significance and glow with truer verisimilitude. But by no class of readers will this series of addresses be more gratefully received than by former students of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester. Those who, like the present writer, heard Mr. Gordon deliver, as Principal of that institution, several of the addresses, will rejoice to have them in printed form, in good clear type and on excellent paper. The measure of their enjoyment will be greatly enhanced if they can recall the time of their delivery and the inimitable manner in which the telling points were marshalled and made. How important an asset in the right effect was the speaker's sense of humour and his ability to bring it to bear opportunely without any deviation from his closely-reasoned discourses. So, likewise, all its abundant biographical details were made subservient to the task of vivid portraiture and the throwing into relief of a particular man and his work. It was the student above all who most clearly perceived the vast amount of

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MODERN CHURCHMEN AND UNITARIANS

By S. H. MELLONE, M.A., D.Sc.

In January in the present year (1922) the Rev. Henry D. A. Major, Editor of **The Modern Churchman**, contributed to **The Hibbert Journal** an article designed to elucidate the views of Modern Churchmen by discussing the difference between their position and that of the Unitarians. This pamplet is a reprint, with a few omissions and additions, of an article by Dr. Mellone which appeared in the April number of **The Hibbert Journal** and offered some comments on Mr. Major's argument and an explanation of the Unitarian position. The Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association have authorised its publication by the Lindsey Press in the present form **for wide distribution.**

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Editor, - - REV. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.

The PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION (Mr. C. Sydney Jones), speaking at Newcastle, in November, "gladly recognized the increase of dignity and influence for our whole Movement resulting from the way in which *The Inquirer* is now being prepared and Published."

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painstaking research work which lay behind the treatment of men and movements.

But let us suppose, as may conceivably be the case, that these addresses make their appeal to the reader for the first time in this printed form. What are the features which are most likely to impress one interested in the history of religious liberty? Firstly, the diversity of the means and the men by whom the liberty we enjoy has been made possible. We go back in the first address on "Michael Servetus" four centuries of time and see a great soul preparing to make its great sacrifices for truth. Incidentally some of the great figures of the Reformation come before us. Calvin and Luther, Erasmus and Melancthon, Papal Legates and peasant leaders, all play their part on the crowded stage, and yet the attention remains concentrated on the central tragic figure of the Spanish martyr. How much better we seem to know him and to appraise his services after our perusal of the masterly essay!

Yet even when our author seems to lay aside his biographical bent, and to deal with more general themes such as: "The Tercentennial of a Name," and "Early Conformity and Education," his treatment is not less interesting and human. The early pioneers of our faith in Poland and Hungary stand revealed, as well as our indebtedness to their zeal for truth.

The inestimable service rendered by the early academies which trained scholarly divines for the Ministry of Dissent is shown and we gain a new veneration for men like Doddridge, Frankland, and others. These were men not only of brain but of a wonderful courage. To many young men excluded from University Halls because of their religious convictions they offered a home and a liberal education. Right worthily was the debt repaid in future years by Joseph Priestley, Thomas Emlyn, and the like.

Subjects seemingly more remote in interest are only so in appearance. We readily recall the fact that to our student mind the announcement of the address, "Peter Bayle of the Dictionary," held out little promise of unmixed enjoyment. Perhaps the reason was that we were not of the class of readers who regard a dictionary as light literature. Nevertheless, our pleasant disillusionment on hearing the address delivered will be repeated by our readers when they realise how vivid and illuminating such a theme can become in the true interpreter's hands.

It is impossible to deal in detail with all the addresses. But a few words must be said about the last three: "Theophilus Lindsey and his Chapel," "Thomas Belsham, his place in the Unitarian Movement," and "Richard Wright and Missionary Enterprise." To study these carefully is to be made aware of vitally important contributions to modern Unitarianism. The brave, self-sacrificing action of Lindsey in leaving his charge at Catterick to go out into the wilderness and establish the first Unitarian Chapel in 1774—that is an episode which with its important consequences should be known to every lover of the liberal faith. If Belsham is less familiar to the majority of professing Unitarians that will be no excuse for minimising either the man or his services, when Mr. Gordon's account of him has been duly read. Nor will strenuous Richard Wright fail to come into his own as a gallant and successful evangelist of a free faith when his life's history is scanned and appreciated for what it is.

If gratitude is a mark of favours to come, we can only express our fervent hope that Mr. Gordon may be spared to publish many more "Addresses Biographical and Historical." Assuredly the Dictionary of National Biography might release for independent publication some of the invaluable contributions which appear above the initials "A.G."

Temperance Notes.

TOP OF THE POLL.

The Irish Temperance League are justly proud of their recent achievement at the Belfast Municipal Elections. They had their own candidate who stood as an Independent on other matters, but pledged himself in the interest of Temperance Reform. There were six candidates for three vacancies, and he obtained over 1,000 votes more than the second successful one. It was a sweeping victory, and if it proves nothing else (for he is a bold man who will dogmatize over election matters, particularly municipal) it proves that our Temperance friends of Belfast are wide awake and possess organizing powers. We trust that Mr. David Wilson will serve his brother citizens faithfully and well on all matters.

TAKE CARE OF THE CHILDREN AND—

We remember a certain occasion, at a gathering of ministers and laymen for discussing Church affairs, when the work of the Temperance Committee was under consideration. It was suggested from two or three members that Temperance Work among our churches did not need a special committee to organise this work alone, for this work could be safely and profitably left in the hands of the Sunday School Committee. There is no doubt about it that alcohol is MORE harmful to children than to adults. But there was more than that at the bottom of the suggestion. Remembering our Sunday School Committee's work is solely concerned with the welfare of the children, then the inference is naturally drawn that Temperance work is solely concerned with children. We bring up the matter in this way, because it is an attitude that has long prevailed among adults (inside and outside the churches). Teach and preach Temperance to the children, but leave us alone! Our Lord said the child was nearer the Kingdom of Heaven, so we need not despair of such apathy among the adults. We also note that many who have succumbed to the powerful temptation of strong drink have been most anxious that their children should be regular attenders at the Band of Hope. As one father said to his child (it is a type): "John, my son, steer clear of strong drink. Don't touch the accurséd stuff. Don't begin it. I wish I hadn't . . . but it is too late now!"

A TELEPHONE STORY.

"I'm jaded," he said; "I'd like to go somewhere where I could be completely cut off from the rest of the world, and——"

"Try a telephone box," said the cynic. ("Sunday Express.")

We have repeatedly expressed in this column our desire to get in touch with our Temperance workers. To know what our churches are doing and learn if and how their work is progressing and so on. But there is no answer. We "are completely cut off."

P. G.

Two Theological Queries.

"A former Bishop of Derry, when visiting in Germany, once called upon Goethe, and proceeded to censure him for the immoral tendency of the 'Sorrows of Werther.' 'The book,' he said, 'has driven many young fellows to despair and suicide.' 'Very good, my Lord,' replied Goethe, 'but how about the orthodox sermons preached in your own diocese, under your own superintendence, that gave line upon line upon sin and hell and repentance, which frighten susceptible people even unto madness?" The Bishop's rejoinder is not given."

Frederick Denison Maurice was dismissed from his post at King's College because of his heterodox views, especially in regard to the doctrine of Eternal Punishment. J. A. Froude the historian, has a good story in this connection:—"Meeting an old-fashioned City Alderman at dinner a few days afterwards, Maurice was asked to explain his views. This he did, when the Alderman called out in great horror: 'What! no devil and no hell! Then what, may I ask, sir, become of the consolation of Christianity?'"

Our Position and Liberty.

(By the Moderator.)

We stand for Christian Religion and for Religious Liberty for Christians. If to be a Christian communion in respect of our religious thought and ideal, is a high claim, there is no Christian communion which can make it more truthfully than we. No Christian communion can claim logically that its religion is Christian in the sense that the whole of its religious creed is conformable with the religious creed of Christ. We make no such claim as that. No one could make that claim in respect of any creed that has ever been either publicly formulated or privately held; for there is nowhere in existence any statement of the creed of Christ bearing his own seal of authenticity. If a creed were claimed to be the very creed of Christ as having been constructed out of data furnished by members of the early Christian Church properly qualified to hand down an infallible tradition, all honest persons would admit that the claim was pretentious and illogical. For there is no evidence, though there may be an assertion, that persons ever existed who were qualified to give their own and succeeding generations an absolutely reliable statement of the creed of Christ. Certainly the Gospels which constitute by far the most important source we possess of information about the life, character and mind of Christ, do not contain the necessary data. Any other documents, and all other documents put together, purporting to give us truthful information about Christ, may be said to be negligible beside the Gospels. Now the construction of a creed is the work of a theologian; whereas the Gospel lead us to the conclusion that Christ was not a theologian; or at all events that he was not a teacher of theology. They show him to have been incidentally a teacher of religion, but primarily and continuously a teacher of religious life.

We Non-Subscribing Presbyterians do not claim that we have learned our theology from Christ. We own that has come to us partly from Christ, partly from other thinkers (some Biblical and others not), and partly from our individual experience. The process of the growth of our theology has differed from that of most other Christian theology, in freedom (almost though not quite total) from the influence of the kind of thinker who is more concerned to will that others shall believe what he wants them to, than to help them to believe what he himself considers to be utterly credible. Our theology, or at all events the theology of some of us, has not been wholly free from influence of that kind; because even we, or some of us, without acknowledging the authority of teachers who have done their best to extend it, have sometimes been more or less caught by it, through contact with and contamination by, the minds of those who are its more thorough victims.

In saying that we are Christians we mean that we are conscious of our immeasurable indebtedness to Christ for the intensity of our religious sense and of our religious faith and aspiration. We are indebted to him, first for the inspiration of religious feeling contained in such precious though imperfect delineation of his personality and such precious though meagre record of his spiritual discourse as the Gospels present us with. But we are indebted to him secondly, and equally, if not in greater measure, for the holy spirit he caused to enter into, or to descend upon, individuals amongst his first disciples; and which has been an animating force in the world as derived from them, and passing on from disciples to disciples of Christ in unending succession. For all that, in saying that we are Christians, we do not mean that we look to his recorded word as the Jews looked to the recorded word of Moses, as a full and final law for our religious life. Our true guide to conduct is our individual intelligence made fervid with love for God

and love for man kindled in us by the *spirit* of Christ. Again, in saying that we are Christians, we do not pretend to be unanimous in entertaining any stereotyped body of doctrines about God or Christ or the world or life now or life to come. Each of us claims for himself and equally for any of the rest, unlimited liberty to think (and to think aloud) whatever conscientious study or private experience and the information and reflections of others has rendered credible. And surely there can be no sincere hope of truthfulness, if in the quest for theological or christological and religious truth, honesty be hampered by any limit to the liberty to think, and by any limit to the liberty to teach or learn what the teacher veritably thinks.

Obituary.

JOHN M'CAW.

We regret to have to report the death of Mr. John M'Caw, a respected resident of Moira, Co. Down, and a highly-esteemed member of the Old, or First Presbyterian Congregation of that place, founded upwards of 230 years ago. Of the 17 ministers of the said Congregation, Mr. M'Caw sat under five of them, and for some of these he, like his father and grandfather, acted as precentor for quite a number of years. Born nearly 75 years ago, he lived all his life in the house in which he first breathed, and in which he reared a devoted family of three sons and a daughter, one of the former having pre-deceased him. The funeral, which was numerously attended, took place on the 13th January to the family burying-ground close to his residence, the services on the occasion being in the hands of his old friend, the Rev. J. A. Kelly, of Dunmurry, who was kindly assisted by the Rev. W. E. Hurst, Rector, and Rev. R. G. M'Farland, Presbyterian minister, neighbours of the deceased, who will be greatly missed by his family, and a numerous circle of friends.

The Creed of a Naturalist, John Burroughs.

"Religion does not mean as much to most people as it did two or three generations ago. I often look back and envy my father the satisfaction he got in his church. He got companionship. He was one of a fold. He did not feel the great cosmic chill as I feel it. I mean the feeling that comes to one when he sees the tremendous processes of nature go on entirely independent of him, and knows that he is not shut in by any protecting walls, that he has to take his chances and warm himself as best he can. I suppose I get from literature something like what father got from his church. The church saved him, and this other will save me."

This comment of his on Religion is unquestionably unorthodox and reveals the essence of modern thought on the subject. "The fear of hell is about evaporated in these days. I never had a really vivid realization of anything of the sort myself; and I never had the least belief in the devil. For if the devil existed, he was created by God, who was therefore in partnership with him." "I never speculated about the Trinity. I always looked on that as a puzzle men made for themselves, and then worked out the solution as best they could." "I did not believe in evil the way people commonly believe in it." "I did not think there was a dualism in nature—two things struggling against each other." "I never accepted the creed of any Church myself." "My reverence is for righteousness, not dogma." "I have given my heart to Nature instead of to the God of Orthodoxy, but that has never cast a shadow over my mind or conscience, for I believe God is Nature." "There is some sort of Omnipotent Intelligence underlying the manifestations of power and the orderliness that we see in the universe.' "I do not feel that there is anything we can be very dogmatic about. If you observe closely, you find you

know so little, and you find such contradictions." "I help to support the church near my home, but I rarely go to it. The sermons are commonplace, and abound in logic that is artificial, mistaken and shallow. I cannot listen to them with any comfort. I feel a little conscience-smitten at times over this delinquency, because I think church-going is better than staying away for most persons, but when in the City I can pick out a preacher I enjoy hearing—Dr. Crothers, 'the Unitarian,' for instance, a man of great ability and originality. I can listen to him with genuine satisfaction."

"A person is not religious just because he has a definite scheme of theology. He may have that and be entirely lacking in æsthetic and moral sensitiveness. The lover of Nature and of the good and beautiful is the truly religious man. It does not make one religious to have a definite notion about heaven or hell. If you cannot return good for evil its a mockery to call yourself a Christian. That is the true test of a Christian, to give a soft answer when we have received a wrathful one, and it is the most difficult thing in the world. It is the love for reality, and the doing to others as we would be done by that we should aspire to, that constitutes discipleship. Religion is a life—not something apart from the person who has it. Christ exemplified that Life. It was Paul and not Christ who led the way in formulating the orthodox creed and theology."

"Look back on the history of the Christian Church and think how we have blundered along, sometimes knee-deep in blood, one denomination thriving through jealous bitterness towards another. An organised unchristian spirit is working in many of the churches, which is the drawback in the orthodox ministry, especially in modern times, when infallibility of Book or Church or Creed is all but dead."

"What Nature's or God's ends are I often have but a faint idea." "Most preachers seem much too sure and much too ready with their explanations." "An eminent Englishman once said he wished he was as sure of anything as Lord Macaulay was of everything. I feel the same way about the orthodox preachers. But, however much I differ with them, I think we can all agree that it is always fitting to preach the gospel of beauty in the common-place, and love to all mankind."

"Look about your own locality and find heaven. The grand, the beautiful, the loving are there if you have eyes for them. We must not expect the extraordinary—a miracle. We should look at what lies around us and pray—'open Thou my eyes'—and behold—we are in Heaven."

"To-day for the long road—tho' unexplained—
The calm of later years—I offer praise
And wait, still wait, for great revealing days,
Flood-tides of joy regained!
Still waiting I, to find life whole
Some bright mysterious morn."
"That morn has come to Burroughs' noble soul,
He now enjoys the Everlasting Dawn."

G.V.C.

Denominational Loyalty.

At a Conference of Ministers recently held in Belfast a paper was read on this important subject, after which an exchange of views took place.

What is Denominational Loyalty? It is loyalty and allegiance to an organised body whose procedure is one in essentials, having one end in view, namely, the securing or maintenance of a cause which each member of the Denomination professes adherence to.

Disloyalty would imply a member or members speaking and acting contrary to or against the welfare of the Denomination which exists for the cause.

Take the Non-Subscribing Denomination, which stands for the great protestant principle of an individual's Religious Liberty, or in other words "the right and duty of each individ-

dual's interpretation of the Scriptures" unfettered by any creeds or confessions of others.

Everyone is aware that subscription to the Westminster Confession was forced upon ministers and people, on pain of exclusion from the Synod. As a consequence, our Denomination came into existence. That forced subscription was the cause of the division of the two parties and those excluded were compelled to form a Remonstrant Synod for themselves.

The members of our Non-subscribing Denomination are largely Unitarian or believers in one God and no more, i.e., the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of all mankind. It was the independent study of the Scriptures by our people of a generation ago which is responsible for the Unitarian Christian Faith of so many to-day. There are others, however, who cannot be described either as Unitarians or Trinitarians, who rightfully belong to the Nonsubscribing Church. Many of these would say that they had no definite belief one way or the other. Nevertheless they are free men and women and have every right to be in the Nonsubscribing Church.

Then, again, there are a few who would openly deny that they are Unitarians, and at the same time would claim to be Trinitarians, although it must be said that their Trinitarianism is scarcely of the orthodox type. All these varieties may consistently belong to the Non-Subscribing Church. None are or could be excluded from our Denomination on the ground of disloyalty. It has never been demanded of them to have their faith tested according to some creed which binds all together in one belief and so gives the right to full membership in any of our churches. Their's is the "right of private judgment in matters of faith," and as they claim this right for themselves, they extend the same to others. There can be no interference with the Christian ideals of any individual in such a Denomination as ours. It is simply genuine Protestantism.

No Denomination, however, can be so perfect that individuals cannot find fault with it. Human beings are necessarily far from perfection and therefore we must not expect to find that our Denomination answers all the ideals and meets with all the desires of individual members who belong to it.

This lack of perfection, however, should not be considered just ground for disloyalty. No one gets all his own way or has all he wants in any organised society. Everyone has a right and it may be that everyone ought to be unsatisfied with things as they are in this world, otherwise improvement would be scarcely possible anywhere.

At the same time it must be evident to all, that loyalty to the Denomination is essential for its continuance, and that disloyalty carried on and increasing would mean the break-up of our united church. There is, of course, little fear of any such catastrophe taking place, but for those who have our cause at heart it is well that they should realise the importance of their own individual support to the Denomination. "Union is strength." In other words such strength can only come by individuals uniting in a common cause. Had it not been for those brave Remonstrants all of us would have been enslaved by a forced subscription to a creed which would have completely altered our whole outlook on life, filling our future with a terrible fear and the same mental slavery would have passed from us to our children.

It is this Christian freedom, therefore, which we ought to maintain, and which is only possible by our loyalty to the Denomination. The old Fable of Æsop is an apt illustration of this great need. There was the father of a family whose children did not pull well together. One day he called them before him, and asked them to try and break a bundle of sticks which he held in his hand. All of them tried and failed. Now, he said, unbind the bundle and take every stick by

itself and see if you cannot break them. This they did and snapped all the sticks one by one with the greatest possible ease. "Thus, my children," said he, "you see how necessary it is to be united." Keep together and you are safe; divide and you are undone.

W.G.M.

Object of the Laymen's League

"The Christian Register" of January 11th, contains a report of some helpful and suggestive things said by Chief Justice W. H. Taft in an address delivered at Washington on Laymen's Sunday. Although intended for his own fellow-Unitarians of America his remarks are deserving of reproduction for our readers. Having emphasised the fact that the object agreed upon was a League to do Missionary Work, Mr. Taft continued —

To do Missionary Work where and among whom? It was not to be a propaganda to win others from the faith that satisfied them, but it was initiated to overcome the greatest obstacle to religion in our community —the indifference of the people of intelligence who ought to know that the life they lead without religion is a life that ends nowhere.

Now the Laymen's League realized that such people have reached their condition of religious indifference by weighing the creeds of churches, and saying to themselves: "I cannot believe this. My reason makes me feel that I cannot give to this creed the faith that is required by those who uphold it; therefore I cannot be religious; therefore I lead the best life I can. I will do the best I can according to my lights, but religion is not for me." The result of such attitude of mind is ultimately to lead them almost inevitably to a material existence and a material view of things and to a bluntness to the higher and moral life. The purpose of the Laymen's League is to arouse again in such people an interest in religion and to show them that it is possible to be religious and to be inspired to the higher things of life without the formality of a creed such as that which they have rejected.

What is religion? It is the recognition and cherishing of our relation to God and God's relation to us and our responsibilities to Him, our love of Him and our conviction that if we yield to that love, if we appreciate it, if we are constant in our relations to Him, it will inspire us, it will elevate our spirit and influence us in our conduct of life, make us useful, control our emotions, and give us a real and lasting basis for happiness.

There are those who dispute whether Unitarians have the right to call themselves Christian. Well that is a matter of definition. If it means that a Christian has to believe everything that the orthodox creed requires, then we are not Christians. But if a profound belief in the carrying out what Jesus taught, what he manifested by the work He did, constitutes a Christian, then Unitarians are Christians. We can leave the discussion there. It does not make any difference whether they call us Christians or not; we have the thing which we believe to be essential to the happiness of life and the progress of the world.

The necessity for religion in the world was never greater than it is to-day. During the war we felt the inspiration of that great struggle for better things in the tremendous sacrifice that it called for. All of us were lifted out of ourselves; all of us came to the point of looking upon material progress and the gratification of ambition as something low as compared with the desire and the opportunity to do something for one's kind, and all of us perhaps were influenced to believe that it was the beginning of a great reformation. We dreamed as we always do, and are always defeated in the dream, that human nature can be made over in the twinkling of an eye and not by slow and gradual improvement, step by step, toward better things. And so to our great disappointment came the

reaction. We found that poor human nature, as it is, cannot stand that elevated atmosphere for long, and that the human forces in us necessarily bring about a retrograde movement. All that we can pray for is that when the reaction is over, we shall have made a little progress toward better things.

Now we are in the wallow of selfishness, self-gratification, of class conflict, in which every faction is trying to get ahead of every other faction, and in which there seems to be a complete failure of that inspiring influence that brought the war to its conclusion. Is it so—is it a failure? No, I am an optimist. We are going back to the good things again, but what we need most to steady us and keep us onward in progress is the influence of religion, the influence of the consciousness of the love of God and our responsibilities to Him, and the influence that that should have on all sons of men.

There are many of us who believe, perhaps most of us believe, in the preservation of the present social order as a necessity. We believe that progress in a material way is necessary in order that the world shall get on at all, that the right of property and all those other guarantees of liberty which have contributed to the present material progress are essential, that it may continue. But we must recognize that the enlightened selfishness which is essential as a motive to stimulate labor and saving and the prudential virtues will tend to a lower spiritual life unless religion and consciousness of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man shall serve to neutralize in each individual member of society such selfishness and prompt him to the higher thought of God, and of our relations to Him and our obligation to Him. It is because we believe, we Unitarians believe, that it is entirely possible to have the influence of religion work in the souls of men, without a fixed and formal creed which the reason of some may reject, by following the teachings of Jesus as manifested by Him on earth, that we are so strongly convinced of the good that the Unitarian Church should play in the future of the world.

Reports.

Unity Guild.—On January 10th, in the Central Hall, Mr. E. A. Armstrong delivered an extremely interesting lecture on "At Home with Fur and Feather." He dealt chiefly with the "feather" side of his subject and showed a series of admirable slides of his own manufacture from photographs taken by himself with an ordinary hand camera without the use of any telephoto lenses or other attachments. The results, as shown on the screen, were wonderful; most of the pictures had been taken in the neighbourhood of Belfast and Lough Neagh. The lecturer gave some clever imitations of bird-calls, using his hand, his mouth, and certain whistles to produce his effects; those which he found beyond his powers were reproduced by a gramophone, kindly lent by Mr. T. Edens Osborne. The lecture lasted an hour and a half, but was so interesting that no one noticed the flight of time. Mr. H. H. Millar kindly operated the lantern. —The next item on the Guild's programme is the much-talked-of operetta "Princess Ju-Ju," which will be given in Rosemary Hall, Elmwood Avenue, on Tuesday and Wednesday, 13th and 14th February. Tickets may be obtained and seats booked at 35 Rosemary Street. We are expecting full houses on both nights.

* *

Belfast: First Church.—Miss L. V. Gordon, the energetic secretary of our Fellowship, is to be congratulated on the excellence of the talent which appeared on the Central Hall platform on January 17th. The occasion was a Musical At Home, and the Com-

mittee had seen to it that the Hall looked its best; with the carpet on the floor and flowers and palms on the stage, everything had been done to make it attractive. It was pleasant to have Miss B. Allen, who used to be our leading soprano, singing for us once more and to know that since she left us she has taken her L.R.A.M. Miss Gordon, who has also taken her L.R.A.M. recently, helped with the programme as with everything else. Mr. S. Weir M'Cormack sang in the dramatic style which he has made his own and which is so effective; while Mr. Harry M'Ivor's rich tenor was heard to great advantage. Miss Erskine charmed the audience by her recitations which brought so clearly to mind scenes from Irish country life. Mr. Zebedee was at the piano and richly deserved to have his name included in the vote of thanks to the artistes which brought the proceedings to a close. Members of the First House will do well to keep the 21st February free for the next Fellowship meeting will fall on that date and is to take the form of a lantern lecture on Devonshire by the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D. The Fellowship is making quite a little reputation for itself for doing things well, and those who do not attend the meetings do not know what they are missing.

* *

Belfast: Domestic Mission.—The Christmas party took place on Decem-20th, when over 100 sat down to tea. Afterwards the company was entertained in a delightful manner. Father Christmas (Mr. Eustace Gordon) distributed the Sunday School prizes, gifts from the tree (kindly loaned from the First House), and parcels of clothing to the various recipients. With Mr. Gordon as chairman a short programme, contributed to by Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Miss Annie Newman, Miss Morton, and Master George Hagan, was the second part of the evening's pleasure. A delightful play entitled 'Cinderella' was skilfully played by a number of the Senior Girls' Club under the direction of their untiring leader, Miss Montgomery. We were taken back to the days of Prince Charming, fairies and transformation scenes. The only regret was that the players had to perform on an improvised stage, making their task more difficult than it should have been. A vote of thanks to the good friends who served us so well, brought the evening to a close. —The inevitable hardships and privations due to the trade depression was slightly relieved by the City Coal Fund first distribution. An unexpected gift of parcels of food by Lipton, Ltd., to the unemployed of the city, benefited a number of the Mission people. Our gratitude has been repeatedly expressed by many, to the donors of these various bequests. It is hoped that these expressions repay the liberal-hearted people who gave of their substance. We Mission people would welcome visits by any of our numerous friends to our services and school. The Young Men's Club meets on Thursday and Friday nights at 7-30 to 10 p.m., and a hearty welcome to visitors and new members is extended. There are over 30 members now on our roll. The Mission members send their hearty new year greeting to all the friends and fellow-worshippers in the respective churches.

* *

Ballee.—Favoured by genial weather conditions, the scholars attending the Day and Sunday Schools at Ballee, to the number of about eighty, were entertained by Rev. J. H. Bibby on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 20th December, which marked the commencement of the Christmas vacation. A prolonged spell of vigorous outdoor exercise was conducive to healthy appetites, which were duly appeased by a substantial tea, dispensed by Mr. Purdy, the esteemed day school principal, assisted by Miss Crymble, assistant teacher, and the Misses L. Balmer, A. Cavan, E. Hughes, M. M'Mechan, M. Napier, and K. Stitt, lady members of the congregation.

Following tea, fruit and sweets were served, after which a number of action songs were acceptably rendered by a number of the senior children. Subsequently each child was afforded an opportunity of two dips in a "bran tub," and as a result the previous sweet harmonies of song, in marked contrast, were succeeded by pandemonium in the form of rattles, whistles, tooters, and the several varieties of sound usually associated with many of the lowly denizens of the farm yard. Quiet having been eventually restored, sandwiches, oranges and boxes of chocolates were distributed to all present, after which, as shadows were now lengthening, the host requested an expression of thanks from his young guests to the ladies who had so kindly helped towards the success of the proceedings. The response was a hearty round of applause, followed by a spontaneous outburst of deafening cheers for the reverend gentleman who had so thoughtfully provided an entertainment on such generous lines, after which expression of appreciation, the various members of a well-pleased and happy band of children wended their several ways homewards.—On the first Sunday of the New Year the Minister generously presented valuable gift books to the children of the Sunday School.

* *

Banbridge.—A very happy gathering of Sunday School scholars and friends was held in the Dunbar Memorial School on Friday, 12th January. A few round games were indulged in, and then a good tea dispensed by the usual willing helpers among the elders. Father Christmas, showing no signs of weariness so soon after his lightning world tour, put in an appearance and gave each one present a surprise toy or other useful article. Some noticed that Mr. Joseph M'Keown had disappeared from the room shortly before Santa Claus came in. Then our very good friend, Miss M'Cammon, very gracefully presented the prizes. The attendance had been better this year than the previous, and so a greater percentage of the children had earned their awards. Six young people had gone off the roll, but another half-dozen had joined, so our numbers remained the same. Thirty-seven prizes were given. A much appreciated event of the evening, causing great merriment, was an unrehearsed but very well acted and effective charade given by Mrs. M'Masters, the Misses G. Stevenson, M. M'Keown and D. Godding, and Messrs. James and Jos. M'Kearn, W. J. Radcliffe, and V. Bryans. "Marriage" was the word, and everybody from the youngest up recognised at any rate the wedding scene. We were all reluctant to leave, but curfew must be obeyed, and ended one of the most enjoyable evenings we have had. —The Band of Hope also had a closing party just before Christmas, and opened this year with a lantern exhibition, "A Trip round the World." The grave and the gay, judiciously blended, is making the Band of Hope very popular. We have between 50 and 60 on the roll.

* *

Comber: Young Peoples' Society.—A very successful Christmas Social was held on December 12th. The programme was in charge of Miss Eva Andrews and Mrs. Davies, whilst the tea was in the hands of Miss Frame and Miss Galbraith. Songs were rendered by Mrs. James Andrews, who was accompanied on the violin by Mrs. J. M. Andrews and Miss Tasker at the piano. Mrs. Hugh Ferguson delighted the audience with her songs. Mrs. R. Ferguson accompanying her at the piano. Miss Barnett, a visitor from Belfast, also sang beautifully. Mr. H. M'Cormick gave of his best and was encored. Miss Black gave a musical monologue which was well received. An amusing interlude was the distribution of prizes for all those who were present for the opening item of the programme.

Lord Justice Andrews in his usual happy manner congratulated each recipient. He, in turn, was presented with a prize for distributing the others. The prizes for the "Cataloguing" competition were won by Misses E. Munn, J. Frame, and L. Kane. The music for dancing was provided by Mrs. Anderson, of Newtownards.—The first debate was initiated by Rev. Mr. Davies, and his subject was "That bachelors should be taxed." Mr. P. Andrews replied in the negative. the discussion was good, but very limited. It is hoped that the debates will be supported by the elder members of the congregation as well as the younger.—The Unity Players gave a performance at Killinchy on December 27th, with satisfactory results.—Christmas services were held and the choir rendered special music. The church was beautifully decorated by the ladies of the congregation.

* *

Downpatrick.—The children of the First Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church, Downpatrick, had a very jolly party in the Orange Hall on the 11th Jan. Tea was served by Misses Jordan, M. and A. Dickson, and M. Bell. A very pleasing feature of the evening was the presentation of two plays, "Nita" and "The New Baby," which the children, for a first appearance, carried through with considerable success. The school report showed a record year in work and attendance, and because of this high standard twelve special prizes were given. The first prize was gained by Gladys Stewart for excellent work, and the second by Sam Hayes. The others went to Clary Hayes, W. and D. Lowry, John Dickson, Jack Hayes, Eliza Dickson, Annie Corry, Joan Phillipson, and Lalia Killops, while John Quinn obtained the prize for best attendance at morning service. The books were presented by Mrs. Phillipson, who, together with Mrs. Tom M'Cullough and Miss Cochrane, provided most of these special rewards. Oranges and balloons, generously supplied by Mr. and Mrs. J. Newman, and sweets by Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Cochrane, added greatly to the children's enjoyment.

* *

Dunmurry.—The Sunday School party took place on Saturday evening, 13th January, in the Court House. After partaking of a hearty tea, games were indulged in, and recitations by some of the children were given, and much appreciated. After fruit had been partaken of the clock reminded them of home-going, but before leaving Mrs. A. R. Scott handed each child a gift, which had been selected by Rev. J. A. and Mrs. Kelly. In addition to those already named the following, viz.: Miss Younger, and Miss Thompson, rendered good service in making the party a thorough success.

* *

Holywood.—We regret the fact that owing to pressure on our space last month the following report had to be held over:—

The annual meeting of the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Congregation was held at the close of the Morning Service on Sunday, December 10th. The chairman of the Committee (Mr. W. Patterson) presided, and there was a large attendance of members. The Committee's annual report and the financial statement of the Hon. Treasurer (Mr. W. H. Niall Nelson) were presented and unanimously adopted. These showed that the finances of the church, in spite of exceptional expenses, were in a satisfactory condition, that there had been a marked increase in the attendances at Sunday worship during the year, and that since the introduction of the "Envelope" system in connection with the Sunday offertories, the collections had almost trebled their value. Reference was also made to the successful starting of a Church Guild for the young people, to the highly satisfactory attendances at the Sunday School, and to the starting, in con-

nection with the Guild, of Physical Drill classes, for girls under Miss Magill, and for boys under Mr. Donald Lockett. The chairman, in moving the adoption of the reports, spoke hopefully of the prospects of the congregation, and in kindly appreciative terms of the services of the Minister. Mr. W. K. Graham was re-elected to represent the Congregation on the Board of Governors of the Sullivan Schools. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the members of the choir and the organist for their services during the year. At the close of the business, Mrs. J. Graham, on behalf of the members of the Sewing Class, presented the Treasurer with a cheque, for £135, the amount realised by the recent sale of work organised by the Class. This money is to be used for the re-painting and decoration of the Church and Sunday School. Mrs. Graham, also on behalf of the Sewing Class, presented the Minister with a new gown and Mr. Lockett suitably returned thanks.—The church was prettily decorated for the Christmas Services on December 24th. At the conclusion of the morning service the congregation adjourned to the Sunday School, where a presentation, consisting of a silver cream jug and sugar basin, on silver salver, was made to Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Harvey, who on that day celebrated their silver wedding. The Rev. Edgar Lockett presided and referred to the affectionate regard in which Mr. and Mrs. Harvey were held and the congregation's heartfelt appreciation of the loyal and devoted services which they had rendered to the church and Sunday School for so many years. With their congratulations they offered Mr. and Mrs. Harvey their cordial wishes for many happy returns of their wedding day and every blessing in their family. Miss Lilla Patterson, who had kindly acted as collector for the congregation's gift, also spoke, and the presentation (which included a bouquet for Mrs. Harvey) was happily made by Miss Munster. Mr. Harvey suitably replied on behalf of his wife and himself.—The December meeting of the Guild took the form of a social gathering, with tea. An exhibition on the gramaphone (kindly lent by Mr. Edens Osborne and manipulated by Mr. C. Greenfield) and games.

The annual Sunday School Soiree and distribution of prizes to the scholars was held on Friday evening, January 5th. The children met for tea at seven o'clock, and at eight o'clock the parents and members of the congregation assembled and a miscellaneous programme was gone through by the children and much enjoyed. This included a Christmas carol sung by the girls, a dance by Miss Rhona Harvey, songs by Miss R. Harvey and Master Edgar Lockett, two character and costume songs by girls trained by Mrs. Robinson entitled "Good-Night, Mr. Moon" and "Dancing Dolls," and an amusing sketch, "In the Dentist's Den," by boys coached by Mr. Donald Lockett. The prizes to the successful scholars were distributed by Mrs. Gardiner, a good friend of the Sunday School, who gave a most appropriate and telling address to the children. The Minister (Rev. Edgar Lockett), who presided, stated that there were nearly 70 children in the School, that the attendances throughout the year had been very good, and that at least eight scholars had attended every time the School had been opened. After the book prizes had been given away, attention was rivetted on a fine richly-laden Christmas tree, the gifts from which were distributed by "a real live" Santa Claus. Thanks to the co-operation of a band of splendid workers, a successful and happy evening was spent. The room was brightly decorated for the occasion. A great improvement was effected this year in the fitting up and equipment of the stage for the sketches, etc., and praise is due to Mrs. F. Robinson and W. J. Harvey for their good services in this matter.

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Mountpottinger.—The Christmas and New Year holidays tend as a matter of course to a lull in Church activities, so we have nothing of much moment to report. On December 22nd, the third Congregational Social of the season was held, when Mrs. J. Johnson acted as hostess. Owing to the close proximity to Christmas the attendance was not quite up to the average for these functions but those present spent a pleasant evening.—Following his previous sermons on Unitarian Teachings the Minister arranged a further course which he has delivered during January with much acceptance.—A report of the Sunday School annual party and prize-giving which is arranged for January 31st, will appear in our next issue.

Moneyrea.—The annual Christmas party was held on Friday, December 22nd, in the Lyttle Memorial National School Room. Over 100 children sat down to tea at 5-30 p.m., parents and adult friends at 6 o'clock. A very interesting programme followed, consisting of dialogues and action songs by the children. A record number of prizes for unbroken attendance were obtained this year and were presented to the children by Mr. John Boucher.

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